

Presidential Warning
During July 1, 1970 Television Conversation
In Los Angeles, California

"Now coming back to your question, first, when you talk about re-escalation, we do not plan to go back into Cambodia. We do plan, however, and I will use this power -- I am going to use, as I should, the air power of the United States to interdict all flows of men and supplies which I consider are directed toward South Vietnam. "

"...Now let's look at the other possibilities of the escalation... Now consistently the North Vietnamese have been shooting at ... planes..."

"If those attacks should now develop again, I will, of course, use our American air power against North Vietnam sites that attack our planes..."

Attached are excerpts of the nine specific warnings made by the President in prepared statements and press conferences.

NUMBER OF TIMES THE PRESIDENT WARNED NORTH VIETNAM

November 3, 1969 Address to the Nation

"If the level of infiltration or our casualties increase while we are trying to scale down the fighting, it will be the result of a conscious decision by the enemy."

"Hanoi could make no greater mistake than to assume that an increase in violence will be to its advantage. If I conclude that increased enemy action jeopardizes our remaining forces in Vietnam, I shall not hesitate to take strong and effective measures to deal with that situation."

"This is not a threat. This is a statement of policy which as Commander in Chief of our Armed Forces I am making in meeting my responsibility for the protection of American fighting men wherever they may be."

December 15, 1969 Address to the Nation

"However, I have consistently said we must take risks for peace.

And in that connection, let me remind the leaders in Hanoi that if their infiltration and the level of enemy activity increases while we are reducing our forces they also will be running a risk. I repeat the statement I made in my speech on November 3."

"Hanoi could make no greater mistake than to assume that an increase in violence will be to its advantage. If I conclude that increased enemy action jeopardizes our remaining forces in Vietnam, I shall not hesitate to take strong and effective measures to deal with that situation."

January 30, 1970 News Conference

"We are continuing to watch the situation, and we will be prepared to deal with it. I would remind everybody concerned, and particularly remind the enemy, however, of what I said on November 3, and repeated on December 15. If at a time that we are attempting to de-escalate the fighting in Vietnam, we find that they take advantage of our troop withdrawals to jeopardize the remainder of our forces by escalating the fighting, then we have the means and I will be prepared to use those means strongly to deal with that situation, more strongly than we have dealt with it in the past."

February 18, 1970 Annual Report to Congress

"The Government of North Vietnam could make no greater mistake than to assume that an increase in violence would be to its advantage. As I said on November 3, and have repeated since, if I conclude that increased enemy action jeopardizes our remaining forces in Vietnam, I will not hesitate to take strong and effective measures to deal with that situation."

April 20, 1970 Address to the Nation

"But I again remind the leaders of North Vietnam that while we are taking these risks for peace, they will be taking grave risks should they attempt to use the occasion to jeopardize the security of our remaining forces in Vietnam by increased military action in Vietnam, in Cambodia or in Laos."

"I repeat what I said November 3d and December 15th. If I conclude that increased enemy action jeopardizes our remaining forces in Vietnam, I shall not hesitate to take strong and effective measures to deal with that situation."

April 30, 1970 Address to the Nation

"Ten days ago, in my report to the Nation on Viet Nam, I announced a decision to withdraw an additional 150,000 Americans from Viet-Nam over the next year. I said then that I was making that decision despite our concern over increased enemy activity in Laos, in Cambodia, and in South Viet Nam."

"At that time, I warned that if I concluded that increased enemy activity in any of these areas endangered the lives of Americans remaining in Viet Nam, I would not hesitate to take strong and effective measures to deal with that situation."

"Despite that warning, North Viet Nam has increased its military aggression in all these areas, and particularly in Cambodia."

May 8, 1970 News Conference

"I am not going to speculate as to what the North Vietnamese may do. I will only say that if the North Vietnamese did what some have suggested they might do--move a massive force of 250,000 to 300,000 across the DMZ against our Marine Corps people who are there--I would certainly not allow these men to be massacred without using more force and more effective force against North Vietnam."
(cont.)

"I think we have warned the leaders of North Vietnam on this point several times, and because we have warned them I do not believe they will move across the DMZ."

June 3, 1970

Interim Report to the Nation

"To the North Vietnamese tonight I say again: The door to a negotiated peace remains wide open. Every offer we have made at the conference table, publicly or privately, I herewith reaffirm. We are ready to negotiate whenever they are ready to negotiate."

"However, if their answer to our troop withdrawal program and to our offer to negotiate, is to increase their attacks in a way that jeopardizes the safety of our remaining forces in Vietnam, I shall, as my action 5 weeks ago clearly demonstrated, take strong and effective measures to deal with that situation."

December 10, 1970 News Conference

"If our planes are fired upon, I will not only order that they return the fire, but I will order that the missile site be destroyed and that the military complex around that site which supports it also be destroyed by bombing. That is my understanding."

"Beyond that, there is another understanding with regard to the bombing of North Vietnam which at a number of these press conferences and in my speech on November 3d and in four televised speeches to the Nation last year, I have stated. I restate it again tonight. At a time when we are withdrawing from South Vietnam, it is vitally important that the President of the United States, as Commander in Chief, take the action that is necessary to protect our remaining forces, because the number of our ground combat forces is going down very, very steadily."

"Now if, as a result of my conclusion that the North Vietnamese, by their infiltration, threaten our remaining forces, if they thereby develop a capacity and proceed possibly to use that capacity to increase the level of fighting in South Vietnam, then I will order the bombing of military sites in North Vietnam, the passes that lead from North Vietnam into South Vietnam, the military complexes, the military supply lines. That will be the reaction that I shall take."

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